

BIRD NOTES FROM SALIDA, CHAFFEE COUNTY,  
COLORADO.

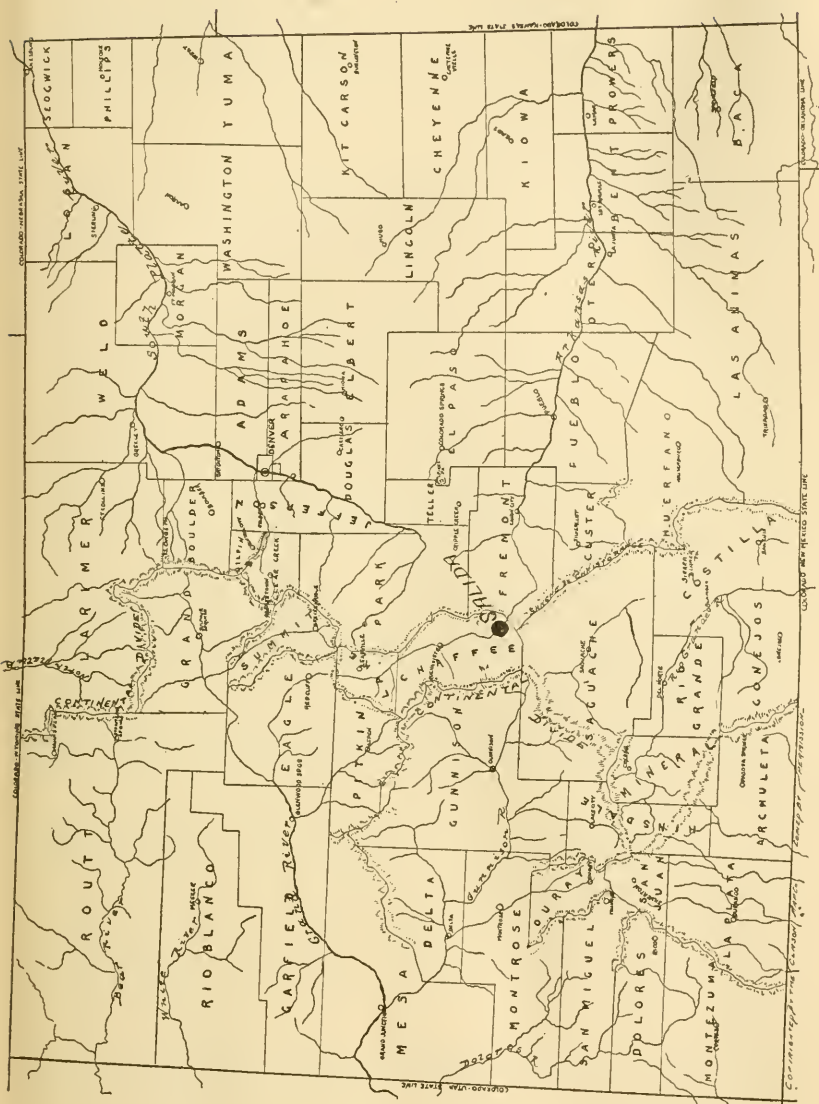
COMPILED FROM THE MEMORANDA OF JOHN W. FREY.

BY EDWARD R. WARREN.

MOST of the matter in the following pages is from notes taken by Frey in 1908, when he did a considerable amount of collecting at Salida, and a small portion is from notes taken by myself in two visits made in January in 1907 and 1908, and when passing through in June, 1909. As Frey has removed from Salida to Oregon, and there is no one else doing bird work in that region at present, I have thought it advisable to put his notes in such shape that they would be available for future workers in that field.

Salida is situated, as the map shows, near the southeastern border of Chaffee County, and somewhat south and east of the geographical center of the State of Colorado. The town is on the Arkansas River, just above its junction with the South, or as it is usually called in that vicinity, the Little Arkansas; the elevation as given by the railroad is 7,050 feet. To the westward is a wide level valley or park, but immediately to the east the valley narrows, and is not much more than wide enough for the river, wagon road, and railroad.

This large valley is bounded on the south by the Sangre de Christo Range, and on the west by the Continental Divide, and eastwardly by a range of lower mountains or hills. Not far from the town to the north and south the foothills begin, covered at first with piñons and cedars, and changing as the elevation increases, to Douglas spruce, aspens, yellow pines, Engelmann's spruce, and finally, on the higher peaks, timberline is reached. A number of these peaks in the Continental Divide are over 14,000 feet elevation. Sometime, when either the whole of Chaffee County shall have been studied by ornithologists, or even that portion from Salida to the summits of the ranges in the immediate neighborhood, we will have a very interesting list of birds. To be sure, Colorado contains a number of counties similarly situated, and whose bird life has been



studied but little. Lake County, which joins Chaffee on the north, and within whose boundaries the main headwaters of the Arkansas take their rise, is entirely above 9,000 feet altitude, and would make an excellent well-defined area in which to study the life at the higher elevations, and it is to be hoped that some day some naturalist or student may be located in that county who can and will give it the study which it should have.

Frey's work was practically all done within a radius of from 2 to 3 miles from the town, in the open valley, among the first foothills, and along the South Arkansas. Outside of his work, and the trifle I have done myself, I know of no other done in the county, except a few notes by D. D. Stone, published in the 'Ornithologist and Oologist' in 1882, 1883, and 1884, and made about Hancock in the northwest part of the county. These, however, I have not seen myself. In this respect Chaffee County is like most of Colorado, a small portion of which, from Pueblo north to Denver, and thence northward to Boulder and Fort Collins, has been quite well worked, in some localities very thoroughly so, while the rest of the great area of the State has, to use a prospector's phrase, hardly been scratched. And thus it is with Chaffee County.

1. **Xema sabini.** SABINE'S GULL.—Two were taken near Salida, Sept. 26, 1908, one of which, an immature female, is now in the collection of Colorado College. This is quite a rare bird in Colorado, but a few records are added from year to year.

2. **Pelecanus erythrorhynchos.** WHITE PELICAN.—Three were seen April 25, 1909, by Arthur Haley, on the Arkansas River not far from Salida, and one was killed near the same place in the spring of 1908 and mounted by Frey.

3. **Anas platyrhynchos.** MALLARD.—One of the common ducks, but does not breed near Salida, and is seldom seen except in spring and fall. In 1908 made their first appearance March 27.

4. **Chaulelasmus streperus.** GADWALL.—The above remarks as to the Mallard apply equally well to this species. First noted in 1908 April 3.

5. **Nettion carolinensis.** GREEN-WINGED TEAL.—One of the common ducks; a few have been reported to Frey as breeding on the little Arkansas a few miles above Salida. First arrivals in 1908, March 27, and in 1909, February 11.

6. **Querquedula discors.** BLUE-WINGED TEAL.—Not common; Frey states that but few of this species come to this locality. First appearance in 1908, March 27.

7. **Querquedula cyanoptera.** CINNAMON TEAL.—Common in migration. First arrival for the year March 27, 1908.

8. *Spatula clypeata*. SPOONBILL.—Common in migration. In 1908 first noted April 24.

9. *Dafila acuta*. PINTAIL.—Common in migration. In 1909 the first were seen February 10.

10. *Marila affinis*. LESSER SCAUP DUCK.—Frey says that large numbers of this species came near Salida in the spring of 1908, the first arrivals being noted April 17, but that none were seen in the fall.

11. *Branta canadensis*. CANADA GOOSE.—One was killed March 30, 1908; it was not seen by Frey, he was told of it by the party who secured the bird, and it may have been one of the subspecies, either *hutchinsi* or *minima*. Geese of any species are rare at this locality.

12. *Botaurus lentiginosus*. BITTERN.—One taken April 16, 1908; one seen in captivity May 24, 1908. It is quite common in spring.

13. *Ardea herodias*. BLUE HERON.—Not uncommon in spring and fall. Quite a number were brought to Frey to be mounted in the spring of 1909. The first seen that year were on March 19.

14. *Egretta candidissima*. SNOWY HERON.—Frey thinks this species is a not uncommon spring and fall visitor. As a matter of fact it is not at all rare in Colorado; the taxidermists have a good many specimens brought to them for mounting. Mr. C. E. Aiken once told me that he no longer made any special note of those brought to him.

15. *Nycticorax nycticorax nævius*. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON.—Quite common in the spring.

16. *Nycticorax violaceus*. YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON.—The second specimen of this species recorded from Colorado, and the only one from the State now existing in any collection, and of which we have definite data, was taken on the Arkansas River, one mile north of Salida, May 1, 1908. Frey purchased the bird from a boy whose father killed it from a flock of five, and immediately after buying this specimen he went out to see if he could find the others, but was unsuccessful. The bird was a female. It is now mounted, and in the collection of Colorado College, at Colorado Springs. I recorded this find in 'The Condor,' XI, p. 33, Jan., 1909.

17. *Rallus virginianus*. VIRGINIA RAIL.—Taken near Salida in May, 1908.

18. *Porzana carolina*. SORA.—Frey took specimens in May, 1908. He thinks it may breed in the region as he has found it there the latter part of July.

19. *Fulica americana*. COOT.—Frey has mounted specimens taken near Salida.

20. *Steganopus tricolor*. WILSON'S PHALAROPE.—Seven seen near Salida, May 4, 1908.

21. *Recurvirostra americana*. AVOCET.—Two were taken near Salida, September 26, 1908, and mounted by Frey.

22. *Gallinago delicata*. WILSON'S SNIPE.—Small bunches wintered in a marshy spot close to the town in 1907-8, and 1908-9.

23. *Pisobia minutilla*. LEAST SANDPIPER.—Seen the last of April, 1908.

24. *Helodromas solitarius cinnamomeus*. WESTERN SOLITARY SAND-PIPER.—Several were taken by Frey, March and April, 1908. His notes say they were numerous the last of April, that they are quite common in spring, but rare in autumn.

25. *Actitis macularia*. SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—Common in summer along the streams, and breeds. First arrival for 1908, May 5.

26. *Numenius longirostris*. LONG-BILLED CURLEW.—Frey considers this species rare at Salida; he saw five April 29–30, 1908.

27. *Oxyechus vociferus*. KILLDEER.—Common in migration, and a number spend the summer and breed. First arrival for 1908, March 15.

28. *Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*. MOURNING DOVE.—A common summer resident and breeder. Arrived April 24, 1908, and about April 21, 1909.

29. *Accipiter velox*. SHARP-SHINNED HAWK.—Frey does not consider this species particularly common, though it occurs in the region.

30. *Accipiter cooperi*. COOPER'S HAWK.—Frey has seen only one, taken May 4, 1908. He says it was making a meal from a small bird when shot.

31. *Accipiter atricapillus*. GOSHAWK.—A not uncommon winter visitor.

32. *Buteo borealis calurus*. WESTERN REDTAIL.—A common summer resident. First arrival in 1908, February 24.

33. *Buteo swainsoni*. SWAINSON'S HAWK.—One was taken near Salida in the spring of 1909.

34. *Aquila chrysaëtos*. GOLDEN EAGLE.—Occasionally seen in the valley in the winter, the nearest locality to Salida from which Frey has had a specimen being Poncha Springs, 5 miles distant.

35. *Falco sparverius*. SPARROW HAWK.—A common summer resident and breeder. Arrives early in the spring, sometimes by the middle of February.

36. *Pandion haliaëtus carolinensis*. OSPREY.—Three were seen 2 miles west of Salida, April 25–29, 1908.

37. *Asio wilsonianus*. LONG-EARED OWL.—Frey has mounted a specimen taken near Salida.

38. *Asio flammeus*. SHORT-EARED OWL.—Frey has mounted a specimen taken near Salida.

39. *Nyctala acadica*. SAW-WHET OWL.—One was taken at Salida, December 7, 1908.

40. *Bubo virginianus pallescens*. WESTERN HORNED OWL.—Quite plentiful in the piñons and cedars close to Salida.

41. *Glaucidium gnoma*. PYGMY OWL.—Frey told me of four specimens of this little owl being killed near Salida the winter of 1907–8.

42. *Ceryle alcyon*. BELTED KINGFISHER.—Not uncommon along the streams in summer. Made its first appearance in 1908, April 16.

43. *Dryobates villosus monticola*. ROCKY MOUNTAIN Hairy WOOD-PECKER.—Resident: fairly common.

44. *Colaptes cafer collaris*. RED-SHAFTED FLICKER.—A common summer resident and breeder; a few winter.

45. *Chordeiles virginianus henryi*. WESTERN NIGHTHAWK.—A common summer resident and breeder.

46. *Selasphorus platycercus*. BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD.—A summer resident. In May, 1908, the first were seen on the 17th.

47. *Tyrannus tyrannus*. KINGBIRD. Has been taken at and near Salida, and is probably not at all uncommon. First of season seen May 15, 1908.

48. *Tyrannus verticalis*. WESTERN KINGBIRD.—A common summer resident.

49. *Sayornis saya*. SAY'S PHOEBE.—A common summer resident and breeder; first bird for 1908 seen April 9.

50. *Myiochanes richardsoni*. WESTERN WOOD PEWEE.—A summer resident. First seen in 1908, May 18.

51. *Empidonax traillii*. TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER.—A summer resident, breeds, and is rather common. First appeared in 1908, May 17.

52. *Empidonax hammondi*. HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER.—Frey took one May 21, 1908; he says they nest quite commonly at Salida.

53. *Otocoris alpestris leucolæma*. DESERT HORNED LARK.—Permanent resident and breeder. Probably more abundant in winter than in summer.

54. *Pica pica hudsonia*. MAGPIE.—Common permanent resident and breeder.

55. *Cyanocitta stelleri diademata*. LONG-CRESTED JAY.—A common breeder in the foothills and mountains near the town. In winter often come into the town to feed on whatever they can find.

56. *Aphelocoma woodhousei*. WOODHOUSE'S JAY.—A summer and winter resident, but not particularly common.

57. *Corvus corax sinuatus*. NORTHERN RAVEN.—I saw one near Salida, in January, 1908.

58. *Corvus brachyrhynchos*. CROW.—Frey thinks Crows are found at Salida. I have seen them from the train several miles east of there.

59. *Nucifraga columbiana*. CLARK'S CROW.—Rather common in the piñons and cedars in winter, and higher up in summer.

60. *Cyanocephalus cyanocephalus*. PIÑON JAY.—A common resident in the piñons and cedars in the foothills.

61. *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. BOBOLINK.—Frey saw ten birds May 14, 1908, and secured four of them; these were all males. This is a new locality for the State.

62. *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*. YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD.—A migratory visitor; Frey does not know of its breeding, though he has seen considerable numbers in spring.

63. *Agelaius phoeniceus fortis*. THICK-BILLED REDWING.—Summer resident, and breeds, but not in any great numbers. First arrivals March 10, 1908, and March 24, 1909.



64. *Sturnella neglecta*. WESTERN MEADOWLARK.—A common summer resident and breeder. First arrivals March 3, 1908, and March 11, 1909.

65. *Icterus bullocki*. BULLOCK'S ORIOLE.—A not uncommon summer resident, breeding at Salida.

66. *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. BREWER'S BLACKBIRD.—A very common summer resident, "nesting and raising young in every bush or willow patch, usually around swamps" (Frey).

67. *Hesperiphona vespertinus montanus*. WESTERN EVENING GROS-BEAK.—Frey saw two in Salida in January, 1908.

68. *Carpodacus cassini*. CASSIN'S FINCH.—A winter resident or visitor breeding somewhat higher in the mountains in the neighborhood. Frey says he saw but few of these birds about Salida the winter of 1908-9 which was unusually severe.

69. *Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*. HOUSE FINCH.—A common summer resident and breeder about the town, but does not spend the winter there as it does at the lower altitudes.

70. *Loxia curvirostra stricklandi*. MEXICAN CROSSBILL.—A small flock was seen in the winter of 1908-9.

71. *Leucosticte tephrocotis*. GRAY-CROWNED ROSY FINCH.—Rosy Finches were unusually abundant about Salida the winter of 1908-9, which, as stated above was very severe, and especially so in the higher mountains where these birds usually stay. Frey says in his notes: "Thousands of these birds were here at all times during the winter. Every snow that came would drive them down to the valleys; when the south hills became bare they would split up in small bunches and scatter and climb up as the snow receded. I have taken all four varieties from a single bunch, and might say at a single shot. They seemed to be all varieties together, and the Gray-crowns were most plentiful, with Brown-caps a close second, and about one in four or five would be Hepburn's, and a very few black ones. These birds fed almost entirely on the tumbleweed (Russian thistle) seeds, and their throats and crops were literally crammed with them."

72. *Leucosticte tephrocotis littoralis*. HEPBURN'S ROSY FINCH.—As noted above, about twenty percent of the Rosy Finches taken by Frey were this form.

73. *Leucosticte atrata*. BLACK ROSY FINCH.—Only two or three of the large number of Rosy Finches taken by Frey were this species.

74. *Leucosticte australis*. BROWN-CAPPED ROSY FINCH.—While this species is a summer resident in this State above timberline, in winter it seems somewhat less numerous than the Gray-crowned, which is only a winter visitant. My own observations made elsewhere agree with Frey's on this point.

75. *Acanthis linaria*. REDPOLL.—Frey states that several flocks were about Salida the winter of 1908-9, feeding, like the Rosy Finches, on the tumbleweed seeds.

76. *Astragalinus tristis*. GOLDFINCH.—A resident; breeds, but is not very common.

77. *Astragalinus psaltria*. ARKANSAS GOLDFINCH.—Frey sent me a skin which is typical of the dark form formerly called *mexicanus*. The bird is no doubt a more or less common summer resident. Frey found a nest late in October containing small young birds.

78. *Spinus pinus*. PINE SISKIN.—Rather common in summer, and breeds. Frey speaks of their feeding on the seeds of the dandelion in the park and on the lawns of the town. I have seen the bird near the town in winter.

79. *Passer domesticus*. HOUSE SPARROW.—Abundant in the town.

80. *Poocetes gramineus confinis*. WESTERN VESPER SPARROW.—A summer resident, but Frey does not regard it as very common.

81. *Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus*. WESTERN SAVANNAH SPARROW.—A common summer resident and breeder.

82. *Chondestes grammacus strigatus*. WESTERN LARK SPARROW.—A summer resident, not very common.

83. *Zonotrichia querula*. HARRIS'S SPARROW.—Frey took a female of this species December 15, 1908, adding another to the few records for this bird for Colorado.

84. *Zonotrichia leucophrys*. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW.—Frey says: "It is a common summer resident and nests, and raises its young around the brush piles close to town."

85. *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli*. INTERMEDIATE SPARROW.—There were several skins of this subspecies among a lot which Frey sent me. It is no doubt common in the spring and fall during the migrations.

86. *Zonotrichia coronata*. GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW.—Frey took one April 19, 1908, this being the second record for the species for Colorado. I have already recorded this in 'The Condor,' XI, p. 83, Jan., 1909. Certainly Salida seems to be an excellent locality for collecting.

87. *Spizella monticola ochracea*. WESTERN TREE SPARROW.—A common winter resident.

88. *Spizella passerina arizonæ*. WESTERN CHIPPING SPARROW.—A common summer resident and breeder.

89. *Spizella breweri*. BREWER'S SPARROW.—Frey took several in the spring of 1908; it breeds in the region.

90. *Junco hyemalis connectens*. INTERMEDIATE JUNCO.—A winter resident; one of the less common of the Juncos.

91. *Junco mearnsi*. PINK-SIDED JUNCO.—Winter visitor; one of the most common Juncos.

92. *Junco phænotus caniceps*. GRAY-HEADED JUNCO.—A winter resident, and probably breeds in the hills not so very far from the town. It is greatly to be regretted that these notes are not more complete as to the Juncos. Frey says as to their occurrence in the winter of 1908-9: "Thousands of these birds wintered here on the tumbleweed seed. There are several varieties, but I have never collected many and do not know just what they are."

93. *Melospiza melodia montana*. MOUNTAIN SONG SPARROW.—A summer resident, but not very common.



94. *Melospiza lincolni*. LINCOLN'S SPARROW.—Common in the migrations, and may breed not very far from the town.

95. *Pipilo maculatus montanus*. MOUNTAIN TOWHEE.—The summer Towhees are no doubt this subspecies; it is fairly common. In January, 1907, I saw Towhees among the cedars and piñons north of the town, but did not collect any, so do not know if they were *montanus* or *arcticus*, the latter being supposed to be the winter bird in Colorado, but as a matter of fact both forms occur in Colorado in winter.

96. *Oreospiza chlorura*. GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE.—A summer resident, breeding at the foot of the mountains near Salida, but most common during the migrations.

97. *Zamelodia melanocephala*. BLACK-HEADED GROSBK.—A common summer resident and breeder, arriving early in May.

98. *Calamospiza melanocorys*. LARK BUNTING.—A summer visitor, not common.

99. *Piranga ludoviciana*. WESTERN TANAGER.—Not very common, arriving about the middle of May, and breeding at a somewhat higher altitude than Salida.

100. *Hirundo erythrogaster*. BARN SWALLOW.—A very common summer resident and breeder, arriving about the middle of May.

101. *Iridoprocne bicolor*. TREE SWALLOW.—A common summer resident, coming late in April.

102. *Tachycineta thalassina lepida*. VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW.—A common summer resident, arriving in middle of May.

103. *Bombycilla garrula*. BOHEMIAN WAXWING.—A winter visitant. Frey took specimens Nov. 29, 1908.

104. *Lanius borealis*. NORTHERN SHRIKE.—A winter visitant, not uncommon. Frey says that two or three followed the large flocks of Rosy Finches about, and must have killed a good many.

105. *Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*. WHITE-RUMPED SHRIKE.—Arrives the very last of April or first of May, is rather common, but Frey does not think they breed, as he says he has never seen them in summer.

106. *Vermivora celata*. ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER.—Taken early in May, 1908; should breed in the region, but Frey has no notes as to this.

107. *Dendroica æstiva*. YELLOW WARBLER.—A common summer resident and breeder, arriving about the middle of May.

108. *Dendroica coronata*. MYRTLE WARBLER.—Seen only in migration; in fact, Frey's notes are only for spring, when it arrived May 5 (1908), and was found in company with the next species.

109. *Dendroica auduboni*. AUDUBON'S WARBLER.—Common during the migrations, but probably they all breed at higher elevations.

110. *Oporornis tolmiei*. MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER.—Frey has seen only a few, in the spring.

111. *Geothlypis trichas occidentalis*. WESTERN YELLOWTHROAT.—A common summer resident and breeder, arriving the very last of April. Frey says it is about the commonest warbler in the region.

112. *Icteria virens longicauda*. LONG-TAILED CHAT.—Frey took this species in 1908.

113. *Wilsonia pusilla pileolata*. PILEOLATED WARBLER.—Arrives about the middle of May, and Frey says it is a common summer resident, dividing with the Yellow Warbler and the Yellowthroat the honor of being the most abundant of the warblers.

114. *Setophaga ruticilla*. REDSTART.—Frey took one, and saw another, May 17, 1908; these are all he has seen.

115. *Anthus rubescens*. PIPIT.—Sometimes abundant in migration.

116. *Cinclus mexicanus unicolor*. WATER OUSEL.—Not uncommon along the streams; resident, and a breeder.

117. *Oroscoptes montanus*. SAGE THRASHER.—Frey has taken it in the spring. I see no reason why it should not be a breeder in the region.

118. *Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*. WESTERN MOCKINGBIRD.—A rare visitor in spring and summer.

119. *Dumetella carolinensis*. CATBIRD.—A summer resident, coming about the middle of May; apparently not very common.

120. *Salpinctes obsoletus*. ROCK WREN.—A common summer resident and breeder.

121. *Troglodytes aëdon parkmani*. WESTERN HOUSE WREN.—A common summer resident, arriving about the first of May.

122. *Certhia familiaris montana*. ROCKY MOUNTAIN CREEPER.—Frey took one in February, 1909. Probably not an uncommon resident.

123. *Sitta carolinensis nelsoni*. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NUTHATCH.—A rather common resident.

124. *Penthestes gambeli*. MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE.—A common resident.

125. *Psaltiriparus plumbeus*. LEAD-COLORED BUSHTIT.—Frey took this species at Salida, Dec. 14, 1908.

126. *Myadestes townsendi*. TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE.—Not uncommon, at least in winter. Salida is rather low for a breeding station for this bird, though one or two nests have been found at a much lower elevation in Colorado.

127. *Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni*. OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH.—Frey has seen but few near Salida.

128. *Hylocichla guttata*. ALASKA HERMIT THRUSH.—Seen only in the migrations. Frey found these birds exceedingly abundant after a severe storm which struck Salida, May 3, 1908.

129. *Planesticus migratorius propinquus*. WESTERN ROBIN.—A common summer resident and breeder, and a few remain during the milder winters. The spring migration begins between the first and middle of March.

130. *Sialia mexicana bairdi*. CHESTNUT-BACKED BLUEBIRD.—Arrives early in March, but does not seem to remain to breed.

131. *Sialia currucoides*. MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD.—A common summer resident and breeder, arriving about the first of March.